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Speaking of and for Floyd County

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50¢

The Floyd County Times

Fix it or close it, state says :

Airport dogfight draws new blood

by Scott Perry
Times Editor and
Dodie Webb
Staff Writer

State officials apparently have joined the dogfight over the future of Combs Airport, issuing an ultimatum that safety violations at the airstrip must be corrected by January 30 to prevent the possible revocation of Combs' landing designation.

Revocation of the airstrip's landing designation would effectively force closure of the jointly owned Paintsville-Prestonsburg facility.

Prestonsburg Mayor Ann Latta tossed another wrench into the works Monday evening when she suggested that an existing airport board may lack the authority to address the state safety requirements because that board does not have enough members to constitute a legal quorum.

Latta told Prestonsburg's city council Monday that a state statute governing formation of the airport board required the attendance of four of six members to constitute a quorum, adding that the board currently had just three representatives.

As the result of a court order issued

last week in a civil suit concerning the airport, six appointments to the board were voided, leaving Prestonsburg without any representatives. Three members from Paintsville continue to serve.

Prestonsburg will not likely fill its three vacancies on the board before the end of this month, despite city council's decision Monday to interview two of Latta's appointments. Those appointees, Dr. David White and Ted Naim, declined to be interviewed by council and withdrew their names from consideration Tuesday morning. Latta said a third prospective member, Sam Isbell, was no longer interested in serving on the airport board. The mayor did not indicate when she might propose new appointments for council's consideration.

Safety violations outlined by the state's Office of Aeronautics stem from an August 19, 1991 inspection of Combs Field. Inspectors reported that trees and brush had grown in the runway safety overrun and approach areas; that a new house had been constructed that apparently violated the approach area; that runway markings were badly worn and faded; that a windsock was not properly located; and there was a potential for unauthorized access of automobiles onto the aircraft ramp and runway.

The safety violations were challenged Monday by Paintsville attorney C.K. Belhasen, a member of the Combs Field pilots' association, who assured Mayor Latta that the airport's deficiencies had been "taken care of." Latta responded that the state Office of Aeronautics was apparently in disagreement with Belhasen's claim and she referred to a January 10 letter from Bob G. Bodner, executive director of that office.

That letter referred to the findings of the August inspection and indicated that "to date, these deficiencies have not been corrected."

Bodner ordered that the safety problems be corrected by January 30 or his office "will have no alternative but to revoke the Landing Area Designation for Combs Field."

(See Airport, page two)

For super search :

Hayes is pick for parents

by Mike Rosenberg
Contributing Writer

A meeting of PTA and PTO presidents and vice-presidents took less than two hours last Thursday evening to select a parent representative to participate on the superintendent screening committee to find a new top administrator for the Floyd County school system.

The group decided on Debra Hayes of Betsy Layne to act on the committee required by KRS 160.352, which calls for a screening committee for superintendent applicants composed of two teachers, one board of education member, one principal and one parent. Present board superintendent Ron Hager's contract expires in June 1992.

Prior to voting, the PTA and PTO representatives spoke briefly about what their groups had accomplished in the past year and qualities that they would like to see in the new superintendent. The members then made nominations and elected Hayes after three rounds of balloting.

Hayes, a mother of two children at Betsy Layne Elementary and head of the citizens' group Floyd County Parents for Better Schools, said she was "very surprised" to be elected to the committee. Hayes added that although the board of education is not bound to the recommendations of the committee, they ought to listen to what the group has to say. "The committee should speak out against the board if they ignore our suggestions," Hayes said. "We don't want to go through this for nothing."

Hayes added that the meeting of PTA and PTO heads is something that her group has been trying to accomplish for some time. "We need to do this kind of thing for all schools in the county."

The group also selected Tim Jensen of Prestonsburg to serve as an alternate.

Bud Reynolds, a member of the Floyd County Education Association (FCEA), said that this meeting of parents was "one of the most exciting things I've seen. It's great to see the parents involved in the process."

Reynolds also announced the results of the FCEA election to determine the two teacher representatives to the screening committee. From a pool of 69 volunteers, the teachers

(See Parents, page two)

Suspect confesses to burglary after arrest

by Dodie Webb
Staff Writer

An arrest was made Monday in connection with the December 13, 1991 robbery of Jim's Stop & Shop on North Lake Drive in Prestonsburg.

Prestonsburg Police Detective Jeff Stumbo arrested James Slone, of Paintsville, after Slone was detained for questioning on a forgery warrant.

After a lengthy interrogation, Slone confessed to Stumbo and was charged with burglary, theft by deception, and forgery.

Slone, a former employee of Jim's Stop & Shop, allegedly used a dupli-

cate key for entry during the robbery where approximately \$1,900 in cash, checks, and credit card receipts were taken.

Paul David Pelphrey, owner of Jim's Stop & Shop, was unavailable for comment Tuesday.

Slone is lodged in the Floyd County jail pending indictment. Bond has been set at \$25,000, according to Stumbo.

Detective Stumbo asks that any information pertaining to theft or drug-related crimes be reported. All information given will be kept confidential.

Thieves make getaway after robbing gun shop

An early morning break-in Friday at Mert's Gun and Ammo in Allen resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars worth of guns and knives.

Floyd County deputy Chuck Ousley and Kentucky State Police are investigating the burglary which, was reported by the owner at 4:49 a.m.

Ada Depoy, who lives in the back of the store, told deputy Ousley she went to the store area of the building

after hearing a dog barking and found thieves had broken the front window with a large rock.

Depoy told Ousley she had heard a car pulling away from the front of the store earlier.

Thieves stole approximately 11 handguns, seven shotguns and 12 knives valued over \$6,000.

The incident is still under investigation by the state police and sheriff's department.

Plug may be pulled on plans to use pool

by Susan Allen
Staff Writer

Plans to use Allen Central High School's swimming and athletic facilities for underprivileged children from local housing projects may have hit a snag in the areas of insurance

and transportation.

Floyd County Housing Authority members pondered those issues at Thursday's meeting, but requirements by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) may nip the project in the bud.

The housing authority will apply for an \$125,000 HUD recreational grant to provide swimming and athletic facilities for children in housing projects. Housing authority representatives have been working with Allen Central principal Jodi Sword and the board of education to use the high school's facilities.

Julia May, executive director for the housing authority, told members Thursday that HUD did make provisions for transportation of children but they applied to facilities adjacent to the housing project.

Authority chairman Burl Shepherd asked if the board of education could provide transportation for children to the facility.

May said it may be possible to use part of the grant monies to pay for gas and a driver if it is provided by the board.

May was uncertain about the liability insurance for the project and said the board of education has also addressed that issue. May said she felt confident the insurance issue could be resolved.

In other business, board member Hamlet Lovely discussed the possibility of the authority purchasing the

(See Pool, page two)

Stumbo to be welcomed with reception

A welcoming reception and dinner, which is open to the public, in honor of newly elected Floyd County Circuit Judge Harold Stumbo will be held Thursday, January 16 at 7 p.m. in the Jenny Wiley State Park Convention Center.

The event is being sponsored by the Floyd County Bar Association in recognition of Stumbo's election as Floyd County Circuit Judge and in acknowledgement of Stumbo's many years of service to Floyd County.

Stumbo's history of public service includes two years as trial commissioner, 12 years as Commonwealth Attorney, three years as County Attorney, and the last 13 years as Floyd County District Judge.

The bar association encourages everyone to attend. The cost of the dinner will be \$12 per plate.

Stumbo was elected to the eight year post as circuit judge during the November election.



Dispute continues

State officials have given the Paintsville-Prestonsburg Airport Board until January 30 to correct safety problems at Combs Field, but Prestonsburg Mayor Ann Latta has questioned the board's legal authority to meet. Latta contends four members must be present for the board to muster a quorum but only three representatives, none from Prestonsburg, are currently seated on the board.

Water project moves ahead :

Users responsible for tap-on costs

by Dodie Webb
Staff Writer

Residents of Left and Right Beaver may within the year be drinking suitable water as the Beaver Elkhorn Water District enters yet another stage of expansion and water line installation for approximately 1,700 potential new customers in that area.

Representatives from the Beaver Elkhorn Water District and the Big Sandy Area Development District will be conducting numerous public meetings in February for Left and Right Beaver residents about the expansion of water service into those areas. Meeting locations and times will be announced later this month. Projected meeting locations include Allen Central High School, Melvin, and Weeksbury.

The purpose of the public forums is two-fold. Specific waterline coverage maps will be distributed in order for residents to determine if their homes fall within the expanded service areas. Left and Right Beaver residents, in need of the initial hook-up/meter, apparently will be asked to sign-up for installation at this time. Sign-up includes a commitment from all new potential customers for payment of the \$425 tap-on fee necessary for completion of the project. Possible payment plans and low-interest loans to cover these tap-on fees will be discussed at the public meetings in February also.

Many potential customers have been confused about the initial \$425 charge to consumers, believing that

(See Water, page two)



Tallying the numbers

Adams Middle School calculated their way to the regional championship in the Southeastern Regional Math Bowl held January 11 at Prestonsburg Community College, defeating such schools as Paintsville Junior High and Loyall Junior High. Adams will travel to Frankfort January 25 to compete in the state finals. Adams team members were, from left, Amanda Spradlin, Ruth Jensen, Michael Slone and Blake Price. (photo by Janice Shepherd)

Fiscal restraint urged for this year :

Mayor details progress in address

by Dodie Webb
Staff Writer

Prestonsburg Mayor Ann Latta gave her State of the City address during the local city council meeting Monday night.

Prestonsburg continues to show moderate economic growth, with slight increases forecast in all revenue categories for the current fiscal year. Caution should be the fiscal

byword for the coming year, Latta pointed out, because of national business conditions. The current fiscal year city budget is \$2.8 million.

The mayor outlined 1991 new business and residential construction in the city which totaled more than \$2.7 million. Frozen-food distributor, Schwan's Distributors located on the Cliff Industrial Site. Other new businesses to locate here in 1991 were Advance Auto Parts, Tom's

Auto Parts, Holland Enterprises Mini-Warehouse, The First Guaranty National Bank, Domino's Pizza, Disc & Dat, Carter Hughes Toyota, Prestonsburg Floral and Gift, Dillingers Restaurant, John Caudill Law Offices, Gregory's Hairlocks, Lexington Finance, Nordin Eye Care Center, and the Pikeville National Bank. Morehead State University also opened a branch campus in Prestonsburg in 1991. Business ex-

pansions included Wal-Mart, Prices Gravely, and the Jim Pelphrey Building.

The city performed 204 new construction inspections, 171 business inspections and 514 residential inspections during the year.

Prestonsburg was designated a Certified City by the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce for the seventh

(See Progress, page five)

Reward offered in cable thefts

A \$2,000 reward is being offered by South Central Bell for information about thefts of telephone cable in Floyd County.

Telephone cable has been stolen at Abbott Mountain, Highway 114 on the Old Middle Creek Road and in West Prestonsburg across from Archer Park. The reward will be paid for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the parties responsible for the thefts.

Anyone with information should contact the Kentucky State Police at 437-7311.



Slam! Bang!

Stuart Vance of Prestonsburg received an unpleasant surprise Saturday as he headed down U.S. 23 into Prestonsburg. A van darted out from Arnold Avenue into traffic, striking Vance's truck and knocking it into a post. The three occupants of the van fled on foot in opposite directions. Vance was uninjured. Anthony Castle, Prestonsburg Police officer is investigating the accident. (photo by Janice Shepherd)

Airport

(Continued from page one)

If the landing designation is revoked, Bodner added in his January 10 letter, "it will be unlawful for anyone to use this facility for the taking off and landing of aircraft."

"If it is determined that the safety problems cannot be corrected," Bodner concluded, "it is recommended that the facility be closed."

While the state Office of Aeronautics has jurisdiction for licensing airports, it remains unclear whether the airport board or the cities of Paintsville and Prestonsburg are responsible for issuing a closure order. The airstrip cannot function as such without a Landing Area Designation.

Combs Field was established in 1959 as a facility jointly operated by Paintsville and Prestonsburg. Members on each of those respective city councils have voiced opposition to the closure of Combs Field and its conversion into an industrial site.

The most vocal opposition to closure has come from Belhasen and the Combs pilots' association, but members of that group have said they would withdraw their opposition if a firm commitment was obtained from a company wishing to locate a plant on the airport site.

Mayor Latta said Monday that R&S Body, a manufacturing company now located at Allen, had expressed an interest in the airport property but she added that the company had made no firm commitment to relocate there.

Public Reception and Dinner

Honoring

**Floyd Circuit Judge
Harold J. Stumbo
and
Mrs. Pluma Stumbo**

**Thursday, Jan. 16, 1992
7:00 o'clock p.m.**

**Convention Center
Jenny Wiley State Park**

The Public is Invited.

\$12.00 per person, payable at the door.

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Water

(Continued from page one)

hook-ups were originally to be paid for with the funding gathered to improve the water system.

The Beaver Elkhorn Water District received state grant money, along with revenue from other sources, last year totaling \$6.1 million to expand its water capacity and install water lines to provide water for families who have been fighting for years for a suitable water supply. However, Homer Hall, a commissioner for the water district, stressed that those monies were never intended to include the \$425 tap-on fees. The \$6.1 million was earmarked for upgrading the plant and for extension purposes only.

The tap-on fees were always a necessity for completion of the project, according to Dave Gardner, ADD employee assisting with project development for the water district.

Big Sandy ADD researchers calculated initially that approximately a half million dollars, equal to 1,100 new customers, would be needed to complete the water extension project.

Interested residents of the following Left and Right Beaver water extension areas need to be aware of the upcoming meetings: Jack's Creek, the northern area around Duff School, Weeksbury, Melvin, Spurlock, Wilson Creek, Goose Creek, Prater Fork, Turner Branch, Salyers Branch, Turkey Creek, Hayes Branch, Clear Creek, Hi Hat, Bevinsville, Caleb, Doty Creek, Bill Hall Branch, Frasure Creek, Royal Hollow, Riley Branch, Bypro, Henpen, Muddy Gut, Betsy Clark Branch, Hunter Branch, Fisher Hollow, Henry's Branch, Doc Allen Branch, and residents along Rt. 7.

In a separate application for funding, the Beaver Elkhorn Water District, with the assistance of the Big Sandy Area Development District, submitted the necessary documentation to the Kentucky Division of Abandoned Mine Lands in June, 1991 regarding the Arkansas Creek area.

An ADD study shows that Arkansas Creek residents' wells, their primary source of water, was adversely affected by mining in the area. If state and federal studies agree, that area

will be in line for 100 percent funding that will enable Beaver Elkhorn to lay water lines to Arkansas Creek residents.

The current upgrading of the water plant will give Beaver Elkhorn the capacity to supply water into that area as well as Left and Right Beaver, Homer Hall said Tuesday.

Pool

(Continued from page one)

old Wayland School, if declared surplus property by the board of education, to renovate for low income housing.

Lovely said the buildings and gym are in excellent condition, structurally, and the location is well out of the floodplain.

Board member Morris Hylton expressed concern about the high cost of renovating older buildings into apartments.

The board agreed to explore the possibility of applying for grant monies through HUD and the Kentucky Housing Corporation.

In other business:
• the board approved a plan to put up a sign at the Ivy Creek housing project;
• discussed the budget and employee salaries for the county's Section 8 housing; and
• heard an update on the Left Beaver housing project that is expected to put out for bid in February.

The next scheduled meeting of the board is Thursday, February 13 at 6 p.m. at the housing office in Green Acres at Prestonsburg. The meetings are open to the public.

Parents

(Continued from page one)

selected Reynolds and Carol Stumbo to serve on the committee. Willie Elliott and Janice Allen were chosen by the group as alternates.

In a related matter, Floyd County principals elected John M. Stumbo principal Gary Newman to be their representative on the screening committee. Principals met Friday morning at Adams Middle School and elected Newman by secret ballot.

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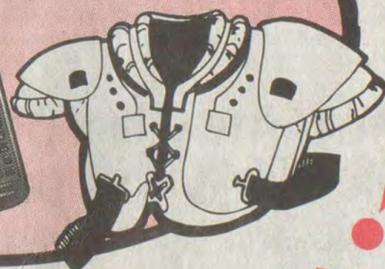
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FOR SALE OR RENT: Three bedroom house on Abbott Mountain. Fireplace, central heat/air. Two bath. Full basement. Call 886-6900 or 285-9529.

FOR SALE: David Brown farm tractor. Repossessed—take over payments. Frasure's Farm Equipment, Prestonsburg. Call 886-6900.

FOR SALE: New refrigerator, \$300; new air conditioner, \$300; new stove, \$150. Call 886-2512 after 5 p.m.

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USED DOUBLEWIDE. Excellent condition. 1987 Cavalier. Three bedroom, two bath. Make offer. Can be seen at Hylton Homes, U.S. Highway 23, Ivel, KY. Call 1-800-264-4835 for appointment.

Support group meeting

The East Kentucky Head Injury Support Group will have a meeting on January 18, from 10:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. at the Floyd County Library. Family members, survivors, and friends are invited to attend. For more information call 946-2308 or 432-8011.

Advance Directives

On Monday, January 20, from 11-11:45 a.m. the tenth of the Advance Directives meetings will be held at the Johnson County Senior Citizens Center at Paintsville.

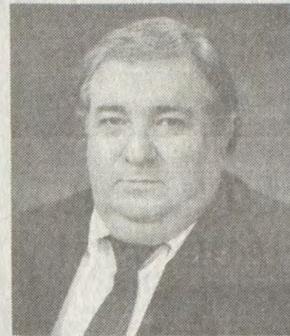
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Childbirth preparation classes for teens

Our Lady of the Way Hospital is beginning a new series of childbirth preparation classes for pregnant teens and pre-teens through the "I Love my Baby" program, a branch of WomanCare. The classes are held on Thursday evenings from 4:30-6 p.m. at the Sexton Complex.

Teens and pre-teens are recommended to enter the program soon after pregnancy is determined and are encouraged to bring with them as many support persons as they wish. The program is designed to provide pregnant teens and pre-teens the opportunity to meet with other young women and men who are faced with

similar experiences, decisions, and fears as they face being parents at a young age. The classes are free and will include various practical experiences which may lead to a more relaxed pregnancy, labor, birth and transition into parenthood.

Every effort will be made to provide transportation for those teens who are unable to get a ride to the classes. For more information or to make arrangements to register for the class and check on transportation possibilities, contact the Community Health Education Office at 285-5181, Extension 388.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Floyd County Health Department has a vacancy for Clerk I.

Requirements for this position are as follows:

Graduation from high school or equivalent. Typing will be required with some computer skills preferred but not required.

Beginning salary for this position is \$4.80 per hour.

Applications for this position may be obtained from the Floyd County Health Department in Prestonsburg, KY.

Applications for this position must be received by the State Merit System Office on or before midnight January 24, 1992.

For more information concerning this position call 886-2788.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Golfers delight

On January 1 - March 31 a small fee includes three days green fees, two nights lodging, two breakfasts, and two dinners at the Jenny Wiley State Park. Advance reservations required. For more information, call 1-800-255-PARK.

AMS PTA to meet

The Adams Middle School PTA will meet on Monday, January 20, at 7 p.m., in the school library. The program will be a panel on "School Discipline: Is it necessary to paddle?" Also the winning Math Bowl team of the school will be recognized before their January 25 trip to Frankfort for the State Math Bowl finals. All parents and friends of the school are invited to attend.

Viewpoint

The Floyd County Times

If misery loves company, misery has company enough.

—Thoreau

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ALLAN S. PERRY III—Publisher-Editor

Liberty of thought is the life of the soul—Voltaire

Coffee Break



by Scott Perry

We were all set this week to fry Governor Brereton Jones over his alleged "waffling" on major issues but, after hearing his State of the State address Monday we've decided to, well, do a little waffling of our own.

Jones' has drawn criticism for his apparent indecisiveness recently, but Monday the Governor hinted that such criticism may be premature.

For instance:

- Jones stood firm on his commitment to increase the share of coal tax revenues to coal counties.

- Jones suggested that there would be no more free rides for state government employees and those unwilling to work would be shown the door.

- Jones recommended that university governing boards be wiped clean and replaced through a less political selection process.

- Jones recommended that campaign contributions be reduced from \$4,000 to a \$100 limit.

- Jones proposed the number of statewide elected officers be reduced to four.

- Jones recommended gubernatorial succession, but not for the sitting governor.

- Jones reaffirmed his commitment to locate an office for economic development in Eastern Kentucky.

- Jones proposed a special legislative session to deal with health care reform.

- Jones proposed to hold elections only in even numbered years rather than one every year.

Tall orders, these.

Many are certain to be politically divisive.

We'll see if Jones has the right stuff to make them work.

Real leadership will be required to stop the bleeding.

Here's an idea for educational reformers that will probably go nowhere because it makes too much sense...it's an opportunity to save money and improve education all at once.

All the studies we've seen suggest Kentucky students are woefully behind in the areas of science and math. And all the studies we've seen suggest that expertise in science and math will be required if students are to have an opportunity at careers.

Under our current setup, Kentucky schools are burdened with the costs of duplicating curriculum and staff to meet basic requirements. Few systems are able to go beyond that.

Suppose then that the state developed specialized science and technology centers in each school district to provide concentrated instruction in science and math to all students.

Every student in the district would be taught the same material by the same instructors.

Freshmen could attend all day Monday, sophomores on Tuesday, juniors on Wednesday and seniors on Thursday. Friday could be set aside for advanced classes for those who qualify.

The advantages would be many. From a cost standpoint, there would be one staff (the best of the best), one set of laboratories and equipment and one building. Smaller districts, like independents, could join with larger districts. Students would get concentrated instruction and better preparation for the future.

The centers could be funded by sharing average daily attendance resources and the loss of those revenues to individual school districts would likely be offset by the reduction of duplicating expenses.

Call it specialized school consolidation without closing any community schools.

Any takers?

If your little toes fall off sometime between now and the year 2000, don't be too alarmed.

According to the *Old Farmer's Almanac*, several foot specialists predicted in 1903 that the little toes would "be crowded out of existence" in an evolutionary process by the start of the 21st century and that eight-toed humans would become the norm.

In some areas of this country, such a loss could reduce mathematical expertise by ten percent. Think about it.

Letters

Editor:

This letter is intended for Eastern Kentuckians who live in other parts of Kentucky but still love the mountains. These mountaineers have not forgotten the mountains, and in fact, many desire to return to the hills upon retirement or to be buried here.

Many of these transplanted mountaineers, or sons and daughters of mountaineers, live in central or northern Kentucky. Sadly, they are represented in the state legislature by persons who do not understand or care about their constituents' homeland.

Transplanted mountaineers represent the hope and opportunity for the mountains. Mountain legislators are clearly outnumbered when they present legislation benefiting Eastern Kentucky to the General Assembly. Historically, mountain legislators have had to rely on a sympathetic ear from western Kentucky or Jefferson County legislators for support. Ironically, even though the majority of central Kentuckians have strong ties to our mountains, their legislators have been both unresponsive and antagonistic to mountain issues. If transplanted mountaineers remind their central and northern Kentucky legislators about their interest in Eastern Kentucky, our region then will have a chance for favorable legislation and a more supportive attitude from state government.

This callous disregard for Eastern Kentucky was recently demonstrated by central Kentucky legislative leaders who cut the mountain's representation in Washington D.C. by one-half through a bizarre congressional redistricting plan. Some of this leadership attempted to link the issue of redistricting to the issue of greater

return of coal severance tax dollars to coal-producing counties. They shafted the mountains in congressional redistricting. And, if not called to task, these same men will renege on the commitment to return a greater share of the coal revenue to our mountains. There are many other examples of how this group of central and northern Kentucky legislators have hurt the mountains, but the aforementioned are the most recent and important.

It does not take many phone calls to influence elected officials on issues. Unfortunately, most people do not take the time to call or write their legislators. A dozen calls on a particular issue by people in a district makes an impression on the official.

If our transplanted mountaineers had been mobilized, we would have two mountain congressional districts, not one. I encourage every Kentuckian who cares about Eastern Kentucky to tell their state representative and senator to keep the promise made to return at least 50 percent of the coal severance tax revenue to coal-producing counties. The mountains deserve 100 percent of this revenue, but for 1992, we are willing to accept 50 percent.

But, you must keep in mind that your elected officials don't understand the mountains. You may have to educate them. They do not understand that these beautiful mountains have posed serious obstacles to economic development, and to constructing an infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, etc.) to educational and regional cooperation. Thus, they don't understand that because of the terrain and inadequate infrastructure, it costs

more to locate industry here. They don't know that Eastern Kentucky has made dramatic strides in improving local leadership and local initiative. They don't realize that our leaders are working together and there is a renewal of "we can do" spirit in the mountains. They don't understand that large corporations, largely based out of the region and the state own the vast majority of our natural resources. They don't understand that ongoing mechanization in coal mining has increased production, while significantly reducing employment in our largest industry. They don't appear to comprehend that coal is not a renewable resource, and our local leadership wants to develop an alternative economy not based just on coal. They don't understand that Kentucky's best people, people who want to work and raise their families here, live in Kentucky's forgotten land.

It is also unfortunate that the Lexington Herald-Leader has been the primary tool educating central Kentucky legislators. The paper has sensationalized the negative side of mountain life while ignoring our achievements. The paper has attacked mountain major political figures, while not giving them credit for their accomplishments. Most unfortunately, the paper has never understood what makes this region tick, what its true problems are, and what good things are going on in the mountains.

Speak out for your homeland. Tell your elected officials across Kentucky that you are interested in Eastern Kentucky. Remind them to keep their commitment to return at least 50 percent of the coal severance tax to

coal counties. We need your help on this issue and on building a good future for the mountains you love.

Ron Daley, Editor
Troublesome Creek Times
Hindman, Kentucky

Editor:

I had a letter printed on December 20 in the Floyd County Times in reference to corruption in politics in eastern Kentucky. At that time I mentioned the mayor of Pikeville in the letter though not specifically by name. I want to take this time to publicly apologize to Walter May the Mayor of Pikeville for any problems that my letter may have caused to him as mayor or personally. The article I wrote mentioned past traffic stops for possible DUI. When I went to my source, he could not substantiate or name the officers who had supposedly done the stops and now states that there is no evidence to corroborate his story which I had picked up on.

I will always stand up for freedom of speech and against corruption but it is clear that I may have harmed an innocent person, Walter May, and for that I am sorry and hope that Walter will accept my apology in this matter. I stand by the rest of my letter but will never intentionally harm another person, either physically or through the press. Thank you for letting me make this retraction to a part of my letter.

Charles Scoville
Ivel, Kentucky

Other Voices

COMMUNITIES AND THEIR SCHOOL BOARDS

By Barth Pemberton
president
Kentucky School Boards
Association

Community representation

Since the beginning of our nation, communities have held the right to elect their own representatives to local government; this right is woven into the fabric of both our country and our Commonwealth. Local boards of education, elected by their communities, stand within the tradition of elective representative government.

The local board represents the community in the operation of a tax-funded government service—the community schools. While schools are the legal responsibility of the state, education happens locally. When the community elects its representatives to the board, it reaffirms the accountability of the tax-funded schools in the community. The right to select representatives and to hold the local government accountable to the community are essential elements of our form of representative government.

Because community schools are tax funded and because community schools are responsible for the education of the community's children, it is necessary that the community hold its schools accountable through the elected board of education. All of the community, not just a portion of the community, is represented by the elected board. The whole community has an interest in the operation of the tax-funded community schools, and the whole community has a right to choose representatives to the board of education. The history of our nation is the history of representative government. Local boards continue that history. Citizens should accept nothing less.

Three reasons why communities must hold community schools accountable through their elected boards of education:

The Children of the Community
The educational welfare of the community's children must be a primary concern of the community since a community has no greater asset than its children. The future existence of a community depends on its children; what its children are taught and how well they are taught determines the nature of the community's

future citizens. Whether tomorrow's community will be stable and productive depends on the education provided today. Every member of the community has a stake in how the community's children are being educated. Will the children be good citizens? Will they respect our heritage, our laws? The whole community has a significant interest in these issues and through the elected board they have the means to address such concerns.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

In today's business environment, economic growth depends on the quality and level of education within a community. A community with well-educated citizens has an advantage over other communities in attracting new business and jobs. Economic growth and stability are required for a community that hopes to prosper and survive. Every member of a community has a vital interest in the community's economic growth and stability, and thus, every member has an inherent right to hold the community's schools accountable for the quality of service they provide. Through the elected boards of education, the community has the ability to hold schools accountable.

SCHOOLS ARE TAX-SUPPORTED

Community schools are a government service. They are funded with public tax dollars. All citizens of the community share in the support of the community schools through their tax dollars. As all citizens share in the support of the community schools, all citizens of the community have a vested interest in choosing representation that holds the schools accountable to the community. Citizens have a right to insist that tax dollars are well spent and that services delivered meet community needs. Without the right to choose its representation, the community has no ability to hold local government (the community schools) accountable for either the expenditure of tax dollars or the quality of services delivered. With the elected board of education, the community has the ability to hold the schools accountable for the use of tax dollars and the quality of services delivered.

(Mr. Pemberton is president of the Kentucky School Boards Association and chairman of the Fayette County Board of Education.)



"He was finally starting to feel good again. Why did you have to go reminding him there's going to be a presidential election this year?"

Other Voices

Editor's Note:

The following article is an excerpt from a letter written to Pollyanna Wiley of Prestonsburg from her niece, Priscilla Gonya and her husband Joseph, who are currently living and teaching in Czechoslovakia. Mrs. Gonya, a Floyd County native, is the daughter of Mrs. Virginia Ite of Dayton, Ohio, and the late Ballard Sword.

Winter has arrived. It is -16°C and the sun is shining. We have survived the first 1/2 months without serious emotional damage. Personally, I am tired. Our teaching schedule is unreal. Usually our teaching day begins at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 8:20 p.m., there is no personal time or space. We both are anticipating a two week vacation at Christmas. Like good exchange students, we expect to experience Christmas in Ruzomberok and then visit family and friends. Many invitations made the decision difficult. We have another vacation in April to visit other families and friends. We will visit everyone before we return to the state.

Our classes are going well. The students are studying hard for many reasons. We have learned little Slovak. The people are friendly and relaxed or apathetic. They feel helpless against the government. They are dissatisfied with the lack of progress. They believe English will make them competitive and change their lifestyles. Red tape is unbelievable—so is air pollution! There is much bronchitis and respiratory ailments. They burn a very poor grade of coal and black smoke pours from the chimneys.

We are treated as "rich Americans" which disturbs me. We did not

bring our best clothing or anything except cameras that would indicate wealth. It is just an European attitude about capitalistic Americans. We are paid an average worker's salary of 2700 coronas per month (\$65). We manage fine because our housing and part of our food is supplied by the school. We are appreciative of our new native lifestyle. I can never adequately describe the lifestyles here. Some things are primitive and others are quite modern. The postal system is primitive. We never know if our letters are being sent or not. Our experience with packages is terrible. They keep coming back for more postage and the ones we receive are taxed even if (they are) old things. One thing for sure, we are known at the post office! The handling of food stuff is questionable. The water is safe. The Slovak lifestyle is not difficult—just different. If you are materialistic and expect entertainment, this is not the place to come. They quality of the products and technology needs much improvement before they can compete in a world-wide market. At the same time there are specialty items of high quality crystal and hand painted ceramics. This a world of contrasts. Every one sews their own clothing using a treadle sewing machine. They are very creative—hand knitted clothing, fashionable and beautiful. They have time but not always materials. In fact, their creativity is incredible! Unreal!

The area is beautiful, mountainous with many lakes and rivers. Because of language and transportation we have not traveled far. By the time the weather is nice again, we hope to travel on weekends. The school director will loan us a car.

Letters To The Editor

Letters to the Editor are welcomed by the Floyd County Times. In accordance with our editorial page policy, all letters must include the signature, address and telephone number of the author. Letters must be received no later than 10 a.m. Tuesday for publication in Wednesday's issue and 10 a.m. Thursday for Friday's issue. Letters may be sent to Editor, The Floyd County Times, P.O. Box 391, Prestonsburg, KY 41653. Letters may be edited for clarity and length.

Progress

(Continued from page one)

straight year. The Chamber created a Hall of Fame for Certified Cities with Prestonsburg as one of the first inductees.

This assures the city certified status for the next two years, and recognizes the city's adoption of a Strategic Plan for Economic Development.

Tourism is a major element for increased economic development. The city endorsed in 1991 the construction of a new \$10 million Mountain Arts Center, which will house the Kentucky Opry. Architect's plans and a feasibility study have been prepared for this project which is projected to have a direct impact on tourist spending in Floyd County of more than \$2 million by 1997.

During 1991, the Kentucky Opry appeared during the summer at the Jenny Wiley State Park Amphitheater on Monday nights, and gave fourteen other performances in Prestonsburg and across Kentucky.

The Tourism Commission sponsored the Floyd County Festival of Faces, Jenny Wiley and Highland Folk Festivals, Christmas in the Park, Old Christmas, and the Winter Arts Expo downtown. It also joined with the Paintsville and Pikeville Tourism committees in a joint advertising campaign. The Commission received a state grant to help fund the city's brochures and a billboard on U.S. 23 north of town.

The Tourism Commission completed its third full fiscal year with collections from the tourism tax of \$247,000.

The mayor also noted that Prestonsburg was also recertified as a Kentucky Main Street City last year, and received a special state grant of \$250,000 for downtown revitalization. Henry L. Mayo was hired as the city's first full-time main street manager. He is developing revitalization programs for 1992, which include a development fund to make affordable loans for downtown businesses.

The Main Street Program helped develop the Winter Expo downtown. It assisted the arts and crafts council in utilizing a vacant building for displays and sales. Musical presentations and arts presentations from area schools were also held in the building.

The Main Street Program reported four new businesses, three expansions, two building rehabilitations, and one facade renovation downtown last year. The total investment was approximately \$500,000.

In 1991, construction began on a new vehicular bridge in Archer Park leading to the ball fields. The city received a \$40,000 grant from the state to assist in the total construction cost of \$70,000.

In December, the City Utilities Commission received approval for a \$2,001,993 loan from the Kentucky Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund. This loan is to make improvements and to expand the water treatment plant from the present 3 million gallon capacity to 5 million. This project will ensure adequate water service for new or expanding businesses. The other improvements include laying a second line across the Big Sandy River at West Prestonsburg, which will increase volume and pressure there and provide back-up service in case one line is knocked out. Work on these projects will begin in 1992.

In other city improvements, the Public Works Department laid 791 feet of new sidewalks. Paving and repair of city streets with over 492 tons of blacktop were done. New catch basins and drainage were installed at the Municipal Parking Lot, the Riverbank Parking Lot, and on Jackson Street. Other drainage work was done on West Friend Street, Mays Branch, and Happy Hollow. The Public Works Department also began routine, periodic inspection and cleaning of all storm drains.

The mayor continued by reporting that a new parking lot for 70 cars was constructed on Front Street at a cost of \$26,500. One portion of that property was reserved for an archaeological/educational riverfront park to be developed in 1992 under the Main Street Program.

The city received a \$16,750 grant to provide an emergency shelter for the homeless in 1991. The Public

Works Department remodeled the second floor of Fire Station No. 2 at Lancer to house this facility, which is expected to be ready for use in February, 1992.

Public Works also remodeled the second floor of the Municipal Building to create larger quarters for the East Kentucky Blood Center, a new training room for fire and police, quarters for the city building inspector and fire marshal, and enlarged police offices.

New equipment purchased last year for Public Works, authorized by the city council, included a pavement marker and striping machine, 36 new dumpsters and 275 roll carts known as Herbie Curbies.

In 1991, the city authorized and commissioned a professional consultant's study of the city's garbage rates. A new comprehensive solid waste ordinance to provide safer, more efficient pick-up and disposal of solid waste was adopted. The new system includes the use of optional herbie curbies for residential customers.

In other 1991 matters, the Prestonsburg Police Department responded to more than 5,000 complaints.

A major area of activity for the department continues to be in the curtailment of illegal drug traffic. The department successfully removed from the city streets almost \$70,000 worth of illegal drugs ranging from marijuana through illegal prescriptions to cocaine and LSD.

Prestonsburg received a \$14,148 grant from the state Justice Department in 1991 to inaugurate a full-time DARE (Drug and Alcohol Resistance Education) program in five schools in and near Prestonsburg. Sgt. Sue Blackburn was made full-time DARE instructor. Nearly 1,000 school children have graduated from the program since the city's involvement.

The police department reported 64 actual drug arrests in 1991. Chief Greg Hall attributes the decrease from prior years to increased enforcement and education.

The city police handled 296 accidents, opened 102 criminal cases and closed 80 of them, made a total of 1,394 arrests, provided 1,121 motorist escorts, 426 bank escorts, 42 funeral escorts, 342 school crossings, and made nearly 3,500 security checks.

Officers of the department re-

ceived training in Narcotics Enforcement, Explosive Investigations, DUI Detection, Firearm Range Instruction, AIDS Training, and HazMat (hazardous materials) operations during the year.

Prestonsburg Fire Chief Tom Blackburn reported that the fire department made more than 600 runs last year which is a three percent increase over the previous year. The largest number of runs continues to be for EMS (Emergency Medical Services). The fire department made 327 EMS runs in 1991.

Other fire department runs included 20 to businesses, 23 to homes, 36 concerning autos, 17 on grass fires, 16 regarding fuel leaks, 20 involving power lines, and four relating to bomb threats. Several runs last year occurred during September and October when forest fires raged throughout the area. The fire department was commended for extraordinary service in keeping these flames from reaching homes and businesses in the city.

Six fires in the city last year were attributable to arson, double the number in 1990. Five indictments were returned in connection with arson. Seven convictions or guilty pleas were obtained.

The fire department responded to two HazMat calls in 1991. The city received an \$11,116 grant from area development funds to purchase additional equipment for HazMat response. Firefighter William Callihan completed course work and was qualified by E.P.A. to become a HazMat Instructor. Firefighter James Hager attained the HazMat Technician status, becoming the ninth officer certified in the department. Hager is also enrolled in a two-year course to become the city's first paramedic.

Other special training was attended by Prestonsburg firefighters, apart from the required 100 hours of recertification.

The Prestonsburg Volunteers, headed by Paul A. Lafferty, have 30 members. The fire department added last year a Junior Firefighter Program which has four enrolled.

At the end of 1991, Prestonsburg met its statutory obligations by adopting a new, revised and updated comprehensive plan, prepared and presented by the Planning and Zoning Commission. This plan charts the city's direction for the next five years and is a vital tool for the city's future growth and expansion.



Look who's turning
Half a Century,
at the ripe, old age
of fifty.
**Happy Birthday
Joy!**

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\$2,000 REWARD

South Central Bell is offering a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the person or persons responsible for the theft of telephone cable at the following locations in Floyd County:

1. Abbott Mountain
2. Hwy. 114 - Old Middle Creek Road
3. Railroad tracks in West Prestonsburg, across the creek from Archer Park.

Information regarding the above crimes should be referred to the Kentucky State Police at Pikeville, Telephone number 437-7311.

